

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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USIA-15 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01 /127 W

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R 271339Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3460

INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CONFIDENTIAL BONN 10190

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, VS

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR'S CONCERN OVER "PRG"

REPRESENTATION IN EUROPE

1. DURING COURTESY CALL ON AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND JUNE 26, THE NEW VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR TO BONN, NHUYEN PHUONG THIEP, DWELT PARTICULARLY ON HIS CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBLE ENHANCEMENT OF THE "PRG'S" STATUS IN STOCKHOLM. THIEP, WHO IS ACCREDITED TO COPENHAGEN AND OSLO AS WELL AS BONN, POINTED OUT THAT THE "PRG" PRESENTLY HAS ONLY AN INFORMATION OFFICE IN STOCKHOLM, BUT THAT THERE IS SOME PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURE TO UPGRADE ITS STATUS. IN THIS CONNECTION HE MENTIONED IN PARTICULAR SENATOR BRIGITTA DAHL WHO, ACCORDING TO HIS INFORMATION, WAS PRESSING THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT TO FOLLOW THE RECENT FRENCH EXAMPLE. THIEP ARGUED THAT THERE WAS REALLY NO LEGITIMATE PARALLEL BETWEEN THE SITUATIONS IN PARIS AND IN STOCKHOLM SINCE THE "PRG" HAD A HISTORY OF ACTIVE PRESENCE IN THE FRENCH CAPITAL IN CONNECTION WITH LAST YEAR'S PARIS CONFERENCE ON

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VIET-NAM. THIEP WONDERED WHETHER THE US MIGHT ASK ITS

EMBASSY IN STOCKHOLM TO RAISE THIS QUESTION WITH THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT, POINTING OUT THE UNDESIRABILITY AND INAPPROPRIATENESS OF AN ENHANCEMENT OF THE "PRG'S" STATUS. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND REPLIED THAT THIS EMBASSY WELL UNDERSTOOD HIS CONCERN BUT THAT WE WERE NOT ABLE, ON THE BASIS OF THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US, TO JUDGE WHETHER AN APPROACH BY EMBASSY STOCKHOLM ALONG THE LINES ENVISAGED BY THIEP WOULD HAVE THE DESIRED EFFECT. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND AGREED TO REPORT THIEP'S CONCERNS TO THE DEPARTMENT. IF DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THAT AN APPROACH TO THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT COULD BE HELPFUL IT MAY WISH TO INSTRUCT EMBASSY STOCKHOLM ALONG THESE LINES.

2. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, FONOFF SEA DIRECTOR BERENDONCK COMMENTED THAT THIEP WAS GOING TO BE A FAR MORE ACTIVE AND ABLE AMBASSADOR THAN HIS PREDECESSOR HAD BEEN. BERENDONCK THOUGHT THAT IT WAS GENERALLY DESIRABLE FOR THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE EMBASSY TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN EXPLAINING THE SITUATION IN VIET-NAM AND IN COUNTERING NORTH VIET-NAM AND "PRG" PROPAGANDA. AT THE SAME TIME, HE EXPRESSED MILD UNEASINESS OVER THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES IN THE FRG OF A TOUGHER AND MORE VISIBLE PUBLIC IMAGE FOR SOUTH VIET-NAM. IN PARTICULAR, HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT EVOKE A REACTION FROM THE RADICAL LEFT WHICH IN TURN COULD STIMULATE PRG ACTIVITY HERE. BERENDONCK COMMENTED THAT THERE HAD SO FAR BEEN NO SUCH ACTIVITY AND NO REQUEST FROM THE "PRG" TO ESTABLISH ANY KIND OF REPRESENTATION.

HILLENBRAND

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